

Living Streets Aotearoa



Living Streets North Shore

A Walking Action Group / Branch of Living Streets Aotearoa

Submission on the Takapuna Strategic Framework Discussion Document, March 2010

Introduction

Living Streets Aotearoa is a national organisation with a vision of

More people choosing to walk more often.

The objectives of Living Streets are:

- To promote walking as a healthy, accessible, cheap, sociable and environmentally-friendly means of transport and recreation.
- To promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities.
- To work for walking-friendly communities with improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners.
- To advocate for greater representation of walker and pedestrian concerns in land use and transport planning and urban design.
- To raise the profile of walking through education, debate, campaigns, publications, seminars and conferences.
- To foster consideration for people with special mobility needs.

Living Streets North Shore is the North Shore based walking action group / branch of Living Streets Aotearoa, which is working to make all areas of North Shore City more walking-friendly.

Living Streets North Shore represents a group of people from community, transport, health, recreation and other sectors of North Shore supported by Living Streets Aotearoa to advocate for better walking infrastructure and policies and for the needs of those using the pedestrian facilities of the city.

For more information, please see: www.livingstreets.org.nz

Key Points

- Living Streets North Shore supports the principles on which this discussion document is based.
- We are pleased that that importance of high quality, visible pedestrian links is recognised. The encouragement of foot traffic will make an important contribution to the vibrancy of the retail precinct, while good pedestrian connections beyond that precinct will reduce the need for parking and traffic movements in the wider Takapuna area.
- While Takapuna Beach and Lake Pupuke are recognised as special features of Takapuna, and enhance the experience of living, working and shopping in Takapuna, we feel the proposed framework does not go far enough to provide quality links to the heart of Takapuna.
- Traffic management proposals for The Strand, along the beachfront and Killarney St need to be more carefully considered to ensure that these do not become roads carrying a high volume of traffic creating barriers to Takapuna's two most important natural environments.
- North Shore City should adopt the Auckland Regional Parking Strategy and apply its policies for a CBD to Takapuna. This would reduce car parking and increase the importance of frequent public transport connecting Takapuna to all parts of the region. This policy should be augmented by behaviour change strategies aimed at reducing dependence on the private vehicle in the Takapuna area.

Introduction

Living Streets North Shore (Living Streets) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Takapuna Strategic Framework.

Living Streets is pleased to see that this strategic framework looks beyond the retail centre of Takapuna encompassing the area from Esmonde Rd to Smales Farm and from Barry's Point Rd and Akoranga Station to the Takapuna beachfront. The eight precincts, identified in this discussion document, which make up this area are all within comfortable walking distance of the heart of Takapuna.

Living Streets supports the principles highlighted in section 2.0 on which this strategic framework is based, in particular those under the headings of development quality, pedestrian quality – streets and public places, access and connections and public transport.

Our precinct by precinct response to this document is outlined below. This will focus on the importance of making the entire area more walking-friendly and enhancing access to the beach, lake, community facilities and public transport.

Central and Beachfront

We support the focus on increasing and enhancing pedestrian connections from Lake Rd, Hurstmere Rd, Anzac St and the Takapuna beachfront. Developing active street fronts to make these lanes more attractive is important as is making these safe, accessible connections for pedestrians.

This Strategic Framework highlights the importance of Takapuna Beach and making this a real part of the Takapuna experience. However the current use of The Strand as a through road as an alternative to Hurstmere Rd does little to enhance access to the beach for pedestrians coming from the retail centre of Takapuna. We believe the focus for creating a pedestrian friendly street should be on The Strand rather than Hurstmere Rd (where the traffic has already been significantly calmed through planting and street narrowing). While further enhancements to Hurstmere road would be welcomed, we feel improvements on The Strand should have a higher priority.

Options for making The Strand, along the beachfront, a one way lane in conjunction with Channel View Rd or a slow speed shared space, providing safe pedestrian access from the beach to the retail centre need to be explored. If the proposed Marine Centre goes ahead this could increase the traffic on The Strand. It would be preferable if this could be confined to the northern end so that it does not impact on users of Gould Reserve. The concept of cafes and other activities on the Hurstmere Rd properties facing the beachfront are welcomed. The ambience of these would be compromised if The Strand remains a road for through traffic.

In the short term pedestrian enhancements on The Strand should include raised table crossings at points where existing routes intersect, removing the “Pedestrians give way to Vehicles” signs currently in place.

The proposal to allow some development in the Anzac St car park would be acceptable provided the size and scale does not overshadow Potter’s Park or reduce pedestrian connections from Lake Rd to Hurstmere Rd.

We do not support proposals to relocate bus station activities to Auburn St. Having public transport on Lake Rd enhances its visibility and convenience for public transport users, many of whom are elderly and would not welcome a more distant transport station. The possibility of making Lake Rd buses only between Hall’s Corner and Anzac St should be explored. Part of the car park could be used to accommodate buses – the role it played historically.

In relation to the provision of car parking throughout Takapuna, it is hoped that North Shore City and its successor adopts the Auckland Regional Parking Strategy which reduces the provision of car parks in CBDs well served by public transport. Behaviour change will only take place when such measures signal the Council’s resolve in these matters.

It is also imperative that the Council works with the appropriate transport agency to ensure that the current level of public transport provision, particularly to the Devonport peninsula and the Northern Busway is maintained or increased.

Central West

We welcome the proposals to improve streetscapes in this precinct.

The proposal to widen Burns Ave / Auburn St to accommodate greater traffic volumes must be accompanied by greatly enhanced pedestrian connections across these roads, particularly to improve the access to the community facilities in Auburn Reserve.

The existing informal lane connection between Como St and Huron St should also be noted in this plan and its enhancement considered, subject to possible property rights issues.

Improvements on Anzac St must acknowledge that this is an important pedestrian route from the Takapuna CBD to the area's only large supermarket and for students and staff of Takapuna Primary School.

Northern Hurstmere

We support the proposal to make the upper section of The Promenade a shared space. Traffic calming improvements on the lower section of The Promenade are also urgently needed to enhance the pedestrian experience when accessing the northern end of Takapuna Beach and the northern reserve on which the Takapuna Beach cafe is located.

The area around the Takapuna boat ramp needs to be reconfigured to enhance pedestrian access to the seaward edge of the reserve, so that the special characteristics of the reef can be fully appreciated.

The pedestrian connection from the end of the reserve into Earnoch Ave needs to be improved and there should be a safe crossing point across Hurstmere Rd at the top of this road.

At the southern end of this precinct the intersection of The Strand and Anzac St, and Hurstmere Rd needs to be made more pedestrian friendly as this is a key pedestrian route from the retail area and car parking to the beach and the entertainment area, anchored by the Bruce Mason Centre. Given that much of the entertainment-related pedestrian traffic will be at night, high quality lighting should be a priority in this area and pavements should level and wide.

Upper Shoal Bay

We would welcome the development of reserve land and a walking/cycleway on the eastern side of the Shoal Bay estuary. We would also like to see the connection of the existing

walkway on the western side of the estuary to Esmonde Rd improved, possibly with the provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge across the estuary.

Better provision needs to be made for pedestrians wishing to cross Burns Ave from the proposed car park to the reserves and amenities on the western side of the road.

Anzac West

The development of a pedestrian link from the Killarney Park to the Auburn Reserve would be welcomed, although it is not clear how this is to be achieved. Of higher priority would be to improve pedestrian access to and through the Auburn St reserve especially linking this reserve (for pedestrians and cyclists only) more directly with Barry's Point Rd and on to the Akoranga Bus Station.

The widening of Anzac St must be accompanied by improved pedestrian provision.

Living Streets would welcome the opportunity to have input as detailed plans for the redevelopment of this precinct are developed.

Barrys Point

We support proposals to encourage more active development on the route from Akoranga Station and Barrys Pt Rd to make a more pedestrian friendly environment.

The retention of services on Barrys Pt Rd is important as it reduces the need for Takapuna and Devonport residents to travel further afield.

Taharoto

In this area it is important that safe pedestrian infrastructure and connections from the Smales Farm bus station and business park and North Shore Hospital and Lake Pupuke are maintained and enhanced.

Pedestrian access from Shea Terrace to Lake Pupuke should be improved. The section of Shea Terrace at the lakeside end should become a shared space or low speed traffic zone.

Provision of safe walking and cycling routes recognising the needs of the school children and the elderly residents of the new retirement village development should be a priority in this area.

Lake Edge

The proposal to develop Killarney Street as a major traffic route is of concern. This is an established residential street and also flanks the most publicly accessible sections of Lake Pupuke. Currently, it presents a significant barrier to pedestrians wishing to reach the Aquatic Centre,, the Pumphouse and Killarney Park from the Takapuna CBD. The current pedestrian refuges provided are totally inadequate considering the volume and speed of traffic on this road.

We believe it is more appropriate to continue the development of Anzac Street as the major route with high quality pedestrian crossing provision.

Traffic calming measures should be used on Killarney St to slow the traffic on this road to restore its residential character and make it a pleasant edge to the lake reserves. Raised pedestrian crossings taking into account the desire lines of pedestrians to the key public amenities should be introduced.

Conclusion

Living Streets North Shore thanks the North Shore City Council for the opportunity to comment on the Takapuna Strategic Framework discussion document. We hope that the comments we have made will be taken into account when finalising this document.

We understand that the resulting document will be well placed to become a blueprint for future development in Takapuna.

This submission indicates that Living Streets North Shore would like to be considered a stakeholder in any future development processes in this area, particularly in relation to the provision for pedestrians.

If you would like further clarification of any issues raised in this submission, please contact the Convenor of Living Streets North Shore.

Contact

Living Streets North Shore
C/o Gay Richards
Convenor
Living Streets North Shore
20A Roberts Ave
Bayswater, North Shore City, 0622

Ph: 445 6568

Email: gay.richards@livingstreets.org.nz